

THE REVERIES
OF AN
OLD CHINA CUP



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The Reveries of an Old China Cup

Littletown
New Hampshire



BEING AN AUTHENTIC RECORD
OF THE COMING OF HULDAH
LOTHROP ALGER FROM MASSA-
CHUSETTS TO CANADA

TO THE DESCENDANTS OF
HULDAH LOTHROP ALGER

Into this little story of her China Cup have been woven such facts as can now be gathered of our pioneer Grandmother, and her life upon the Canadian frontier.

The author has attempted, in this simple way, to preserve whatever romantic incident clustered around this precious relic of a brave woman and the home she made in the wilderness.

The pages of Genealogy which follow the story will possess particular value for those for whom they have been prepared.

Jeannette Richardson Thompson.

I Am Here.



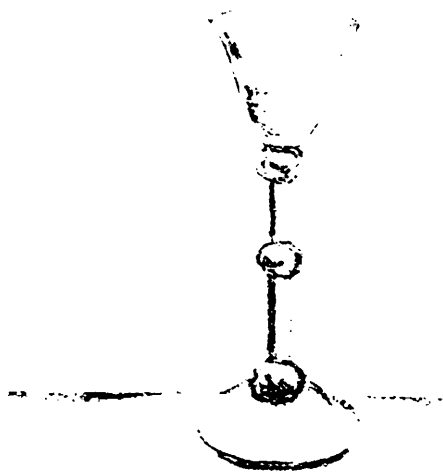
YES, here I stand, an old china cup and saucer, the last of my set, with many an ugly seam in my side, the result of careless handling, and with only a gleam here and there of the gilding that formerly illuminated the dull blue-and-red design with which the Chinese artist decorated me in my far-away Eastern home.

I have been rather scornfully looked upon by the other occupants of the closet, where I have long had a home. They have flaunted their gaudy gilt and glaring colors before me, and called me dingy and odd. But what care I? None of them can boast the proud distinction of my age and history; and, as for my beauty and value, why I seem to be better appreciated every year. If I had always been handled as carefully and reverently as I am now, I should be as fresh and bright as when I crossed the seas over a hundred years ago. However, I have noticed that nearly all articles that live to my great age have a rather battered appearance; though there is a wine-glass that stands beside me who boasts that he is even older than I—nearly two hundred years old, in fact—and he hasn't a nick nor a crack about him. But then, he is only common pressed glass, and I have known this family years enough to learn that they are a sober, temperate family, and I do not believe he has ever been of much use to them.

He tells, however, of the time when many a minister and other honored dignitaries in Church and society found refreshment by his aid. Then he used to be borne out in state by the

I A M H E R E

side of the decanter filled with good old wine. Now he complains that there is no more true-hearted hospitality, and that he never leaves the shelves unless he is carefully carried out by the mistress, who entertains some honored guest, to whom she explains that he belonged to a great-great-grandmother, Ruth Willis. I usually accompany him on these trips; and though, I must confess, I sometimes envy him his fresh unbroken condition, still I comfort myself with the thought that my life has been a more useful one than his, as my every crack can prove, for they tell of a long life of service on the Canadian frontier--a life of which I am the only survivor, all my brothers and sisters having long since crumbled away.



My Arrival.



NOW I am not going to tell you of my life in China. Indeed, I have become so thoroughly Americanized the subject is rather distasteful to me; and the exact date of my long voyage has slipped my recollection. I cannot even remember the port from which we sailed, nor where we landed, nor even the name of the good ship which brought me so safely over. But I do remember very distinctly the captain, Captain Church; and we very soon learned that our jolly captain, whose loud, rough voice made us rattle in terror, was carrying us as a wedding present to his niece, Huldah Lothrop, who had just married a young man in Bridgewater, Edmund Alger by name.

Seventeen eighty-six was the year, as I have often heard the family say. But it is all indistinct to me. Perhaps my long voyage and the strangeness of my new surroundings somewhat benumbed me.

One thing I do remember very distinctly, however, and that is, the joy and pride with which our young mistress received us; with what loving care we were washed and arranged in what she called the "beaufat," a kind of cupboard with glass doors through which we were viewed by many an admiring, and sometimes I fear, envious neighbor.



My New Home.



THE New England home looked rather bare and cold to our Oriental eyes. But our mistress was so bright and cheery that the whole house seemed filled with sunshine, and we soon forgot the sunny skies of our old home, and became contented in the new.

Our mistress was a rather small, dark woman. Envious people called her proud. But she soon disarmed them by her affability, and they were obliged to own that she was a lady. Bright and gay she surely was, and we often noticed that the young husband was sometimes troubled by her liveliness and the company in which she found pleasure. For our master was a very devout man, and his religion forbade much levity. This seemed very strange to our pagan ideas, but we loved and respected him, and now we look back with as much abhorrence to the old dark ways of our native country as our Christian master did.

Our mistress is to need all her high spirits soon, for there is trouble coming for all of us. By and by we began to notice anxious looks upon her face. One night we hear our master say, "Mr. ——— has promised to pay me in the morning." But that very night my master's debtor, who owes him such large sums, dies in his bed, and his son, a rascal, declares his estate insolvent.

Then our dear mistress requires all her courage, for my master tells her that it will take all his property to pay his debts, and that the store and the home must go. But she is as brave as

M Y N E W H O M E .

she is cheerful, and prepares to leave home and friends to go to the Canadian frontier, then almost a wilderness.

There the master hopes to find a home for his boys. There are four of them, sturdy little fellows, besides another Huldah, an energetic little body, whose vigorous grasp sends a shudder through every one of our delicate frames.

Our mistress sheds a few tears when there is no one by to see. I remember catching one for her. What a pang it gave me, and how I longed to help her!

One thing after another goes from the pleasant home, for our master is an honest man, and every debt must be paid. The children stand around with puzzled faces. But when the horse and carriage go, poor little Huldah is overcome with grief. We tremble lest we shall be the next. But we are spared that parting. Perhaps if we had realized what was before us, we should have preferred to stay behind.

At last everything is arranged, and our master takes his oldest son and turns his face northward to prepare their pioneer home. His wife and the younger children are to follow later.

Our Journey.



IN March, 1801—how well I remember that date!—a young man, Nathan Baldwin by name, came down from the Upper Coos with his team to take us all to our new home. What a bustle there was preparing for that long ride! Everything had to be weighed. I fear that if we had been common Delft we should have been left behind. I remember that Huldah weighed just sixty-nine pounds, with all her travelling wraps, and she was ten years old.

Finally everything was packed, and our long journey began. Oh, that ride! Shall I ever forget it? The first days the roads were comparatively good, but after that—it makes my sides ache to think of it! I am positive we must have gone over logs and stones. How we suffered! Some of my brothers and sisters received injuries from which they never recovered.

The first log house we came to, Huldah said she wouldn't sleep in such a house as that, and was much disgusted when told that she would see no other in the country she was going to. At Mr. Baldwin's, where we spent one night, Enos Alger, in trying to show Charlotte Baldwin how well he could chop, hit her upon the head with his hatchet, cutting a three-cornered place and leaving a scar she wore all her life. Years after, when he sought her as a bride, her mother said she did not know but that he had a claim, as he had set his mark upon her so many years ago.

At last our home was reached. But imagine our surprise and consternation when we were unpacked and had a chance to

OUR JOURNEY.

see it. A log cabin, my friends, set in an almost unbroken wilderness! Hardly another house in sight! Now, this part of my life I have never told before; and there is some aristocratic French china on the shelf below me that I would not have heard of it for worlds.

Well, our busy mistress bustled about, and in a few days the little house in the woods began to look quite home-like.



Our Frontier Life.



THAT frontier life! —it seems like yesterday. There surely were hardships, and we had our trials, as well as the family. Often those noisy boys made such a clatter—there were five of them now and another daughter—that we were almost shaken off the shelves by the racket. Our careful mistress had long illnesses, and we were left to the care of less appreciative hands, and our numbers grew less and less. But, worst of all, we had to serve up such dococtions as penny-royal and catnip-tea. Ugh! The thought of it makes me shudder now. To think that porcelain should ever be used for such plebeian drinks!

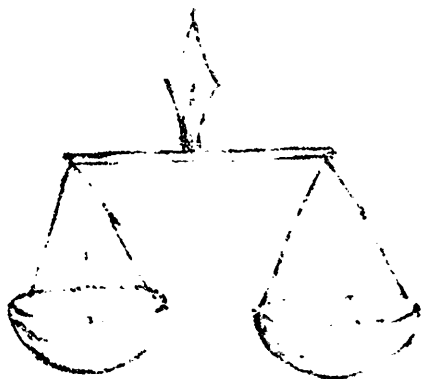
We had often looked down on the coarse crockery and pewter that we had been compelled to associate with in Massachusetts. How we longed for its help now! But none could be obtained for love or money. So we resolved to aid our beloved mistress as far as possible, and were willing, if necessary, to perish in her service. And these ugly cracks in my sides are but the honorable scars won on the battle-field of that advance guard of civilization.

What a busy family that pioneer household was! How my master worked! He had learned the carpenter's, as well as the shoe-maker's, trade, and very useful he found it in that new country. His carpenter's tools and skill were in constant demand, for the country was fast becoming settled, and other homes must be built.

OUR FRONTIER LIFE.

From the beautiful hard woods of the forest he made many an article of furniture, the sale of which freed him from all indebtedness in the old Massachusetts home.

He had been an apothecary, too, with all that the name implied in those early days, and he furnished to the little settlement for years the only medical skill it possessed. Down in one corner of my cupboard are his little weights and scales, which he gave to his daughter, Huldah, who inherited her father's love for medicine, and used them during her long and useful life among the sick.



The New Settlement.



One time there was almost a wheat famine, and my master was obliged to make long journeys on foot, carrying family supplies on his back. Yet I am sure he was a happy man, and my mistress a happy woman. There was a look on her face of peace and joy that we had not seen in the olden time, and we often saw her reading her Bible and kneeling beside her husband in prayer to the good God whom they so much loved and trusted.

It was said that at one time our master was the only man in the new settlement who prayed, and some of the rough, ungodly men were determined there should be none, and commanded him to stop praying, threatening all kinds of evil if he did not obey them. We shook in our saucers when we heard of it; but I am happy to say he was not molested, and kept on praying until he had the happiness of seeing a strong Church there.

As for the children,—well, they all grew up to be strong and sturdy men women. Such an intelligent and graceful manhood and womanhood was theirs that their cousins, who had grown up under so-called more favorable surroundings, were rather put to the blush when they met them.

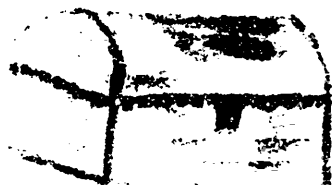
Separations.



THE years rolled by, and we saw the little settlement grow into a thriving village, and the land which had been reclaimed from the forest become fertile and well-cultivated farms. We saw the children go, one by one, to new homes, and at last our old master and mistress were left alone.

Our much-loved mistress—she did not forget us. And though her sight was nearly gone, she took us, poor, battered veterans, bound up our wounds, and scattered us, a broken band, among the children. I was given, with one of my brothers, to Huldah. But now he is gone, and, as far as I know, I am the last of our group.

Lately it has come to me that one, with family form and feature, is preserved in the Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. I wonder if he has seen such honorable service!



Contentment.



AND now, my story is told. My present home is very pleasant, and I am tenderly cared for and appreciated. My so-called dingy colors are all the rage; and whenever the closet door is left ajar, I hear snatches of talk about "old blue" and "Chinese and Japanese art." There is one thing, however, I can never understand, and that is the craze over such clumsy ware as Delft.

Well, I will not complain nor be envious. My real worth is known. And I am sure that few treasures in the household are held in such high esteem as this

OLD CHINA CUP.



A P P E N D I X

BEING THE

G E N E A L O G Y

O F

HULDAH LOTHROP ALGER

Herself.

H U L D A H L O T H R O P

Daughter of

JOSIAH LOTHROP and SARAH CHURCH

Born in

Bridgewater, Massachusetts

May, 1764

Married

E D M U N D A L G E R

December 28, 1786

Died

December 16, 1836

Her Children.

1. WILLIAM, born November 5, 1787; married Joanna Kee.
2. HULDAH, born October 6, 1790; married Elisha Baldwin.
3. ENOS, born August 30, 1793; married Charlotte Baldwin.
4. ASA, born February 7, 1796; married Abigail Sawyer.
5. EDWIN, born May 11, 1798; married Hannah Percival.
6. RUTH, born January 24, 1802; married Rufus Sawyer.
7. JOSIAH, born June 12, 1804; married Nancy Mallory.

Her Brothers and Sisters.

1. HANNAH, born April 6, 1753; married Joseph Bassett, Esq.
2. SARAH, born November 6, 1755; married Edward Williams.
3. GAMALIEL, born July 30, 1758; died September 17, 1758.
4. JOSIAH, born October 15, 1759; married Susanna Howard.
5. CHARLES, born May 2, 1767; married Rowena Howard.

Her Grandfather's Family.

EDWARD LOTHROP, born July 7, 1697; married Hannah Wade. Their children were:

1. SETH, born August 3, 1722; married Lydia Packard; married Mehitable Daily.

2. EDWARD, died young.

3. JOSIAH, (Huldah's father), born February 14, 1726; married Sarah Church.

4. EDWARD, JR., born August 1728; married Abigail Howard.

5. HANNAH, born 1731, died 1739.

6. SUSANNAH, born 1733, died 1734.

7. DAVID, born September 11, 1735; married Mary Howard.

8. MARK, born September , 1738, died September .
1740.

Her Great-Grandfather's Family.

SAMUEL LOTHROP, born before 1660; married Sarah Downer. Their children were:

1. MARY, born October 28, 1683; married Josiah Keith.
2. SAMUEL, JR., born May 17, 1685; married Abiel Lassell; married Lydia Hayden.
3. JOHN, born October 15, 1687; married Mary Edson.
4. MARK, born September 9, 1689; married Hannah Alden.
5. SARAH, born June 5, 1693; married Solomon Packard.
6. JOSEPH, born June 5, 1693; married Mary Snow.
7. EDWARD, born July 7, 1697; married Hannah Wade.

Her Great-Great-Grandfather's Family

MARK, the pioneer, baptized in Elton, England, September 27, 1597. The name of his wife is unknown. His children were:

1. ELIZABETH, born in England, married Samuel Packard.
2. SAMUEL, born in England, married Sarah Downer.
3. MARK, date and place of birth unknown, died in "Phipp's Expedition," 1690.
4. EDWARD, date and place of birth unknown, died in 1696.

Her English Ancestry.

MARK LOTHROP, younger brother of "Reverend John of Barnstable," probably came with his brother's company of Independents to Scituate, in the Ship "Griffin", landing at Boston September 18, 1634. He eventually settled in Bridgewater, where he died in 1685.

He was the son of THOMAS and JANE LOWTHROPPE, of Elton, East Riding, Yorkshire, England, and was descended from JOHN LOWTHROPPE, a gentleman having landed estates in various parts of Yorkshire, and who was living in Cherry Burton in the early part of the sixteenth century.

Her Family Name.

"THORPE" or "THROPE," a village.

"LOWTHORPE," a lowland village, is a parish in East Riding, Yorkshire, the seat of the ancient family of LOWTHROPE, distant four miles from Cherry Burton, the home of the LOWTHROPPE brothers, John and Mark.

From this parish the surname LOTHROP, in its various spellings, is derived.

The name is readily traced to Walter de Lowthorpe, Sheriff of Yorkshire in 1216.

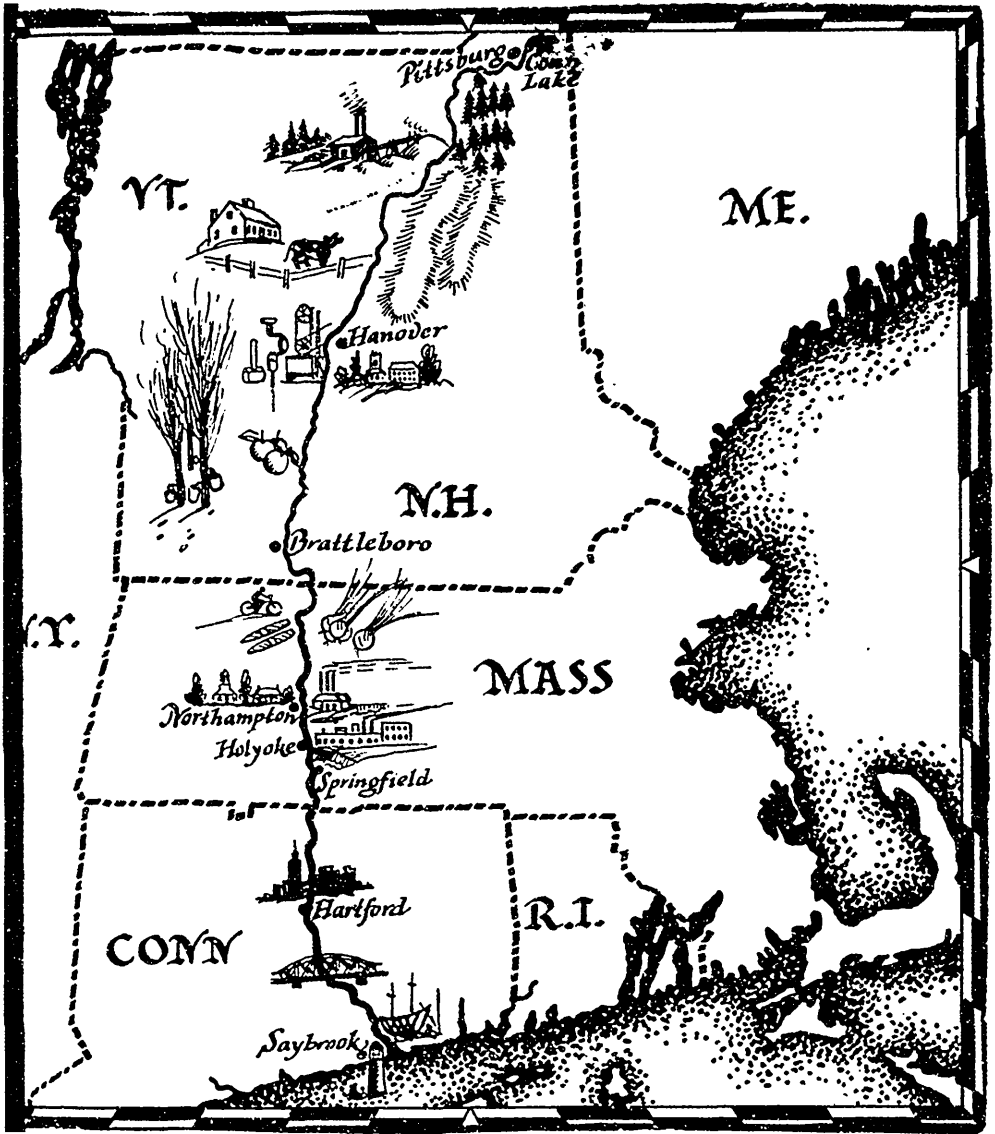
Robert de Lowthorpe was a Chaplain of the Church of St. Martin's in this parish in the reign of Richard II.

Her Husband's Family.

1. THOMAS ALGER, of Bridgewater, came to this country about 1665. Married Elizabeth Packard.
2. ISRAEL ALGER married Patience Hayward.
3. JOSEPH ALGER married Mary Ames.
4. EDMUND ALGER married (1) Ruth Willis, (2) Molly Thompson.

CHILDREN OF EDMUND ALGER AND RUTH WILLIS.

- i. Edmund, born August 9, 1762, married **Huldah Lothrop.**
- ii. Isaac, born August 10, 1764, married Susan Johnson.
- iii. Nathan, born July 11, 1768, married Rachel Smith.
- iv. Ruth, born July 11, 1770, married Nathan Alger.
- v. Willis, born March 13, 1773, married Susanna Capen.



Pittsburg
Lake

VT.

ME.

Hanover

N.H.

Brattleboro

MASS

Northampton

Holyoke

Springfield

Hartford

R.I.

CONN

Saybrook